

**STATEMENT OF WILLIAM D. SHADDOX, ACTING ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 1674, TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO STUDY THE SUITABILITY AND FEASIBILITY OF DESIGNATING THE SITE OF THE BATTLE OF CAMDEN IN SOUTH CAROLINA, AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**JULY 19, 2007**

---

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 1674, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating two sites near Camden, South Carolina as a unit or units of the National Park System.

The Department supports H.R. 1674 with a technical amendment, described later in this testimony. While we support the authorization of this study, we also believe that any funding requested should be directed first toward completing the 37 previously authorized studies.

H.R. 1674 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating both Historic Camden, a National Park System affiliated area within the City of Camden, and the nearby site of the Battle of Camden as a unit or units of the National Park System. The study would be conducted in accordance with the criteria contained in Public Law 91-383 and would be transmitted to Congress within 3 years after funds are made available.

The Battle of Camden was a key battle in the southern campaign of the American Revolutionary War. In 1777, the British suffered a decisive defeat at Saratoga, New York. With few prospects

for success in the northern colonies, they turned their attention to the south. The British government was spurred by loyalist representatives in London, who argued that many of the southern colonists would come over to their side if the British were to take control of the southern colonies. In late 1778, the British took Savannah, Georgia and by early 1779, the entire Georgia coastal plain was under British control. In May, 1780, the British took Charleston, South Carolina and the southern Continental Army retreated to North Carolina.

On August 16, 1780, the reconstituted Continental Army, under the leadership of General Horatio Gates, hero of Saratoga, marched on the British position at Camden, South Carolina. Though Gates' force of more than 3,000 men outnumbered the British force of approximately 2,000, the well-trained British right flank overran the untrained militia that made up Gates' left flank. More than 1,000 colonial soldiers were killed, wounded or taken prisoner and the British captured many of the colonists' supplies and artillery. The battle decisively ended American hopes of a quick victory in the south. Gates was replaced by General Nathaniel Greene, whose brilliant campaign of attrition led to the eventual defeat of the British at Yorktown.

The Camden Battlefield is approximately six miles north of the City of Camden and slightly west of U.S. Highway 821/601. In 1961, the Secretary of the Interior designated 1,229 acres of the battlefield as a National Historic Landmark. In 2002, the Palmetto Conservation Foundation purchased 310 acres within the landmark boundary. The remainder of the property within the boundary is owned by Bowater Timber LLC, a private timber company.

Between September 20, 2002 and April 30, 2003, the National Park Service (NPS), conducted a reconnaissance study of the Camden battlefield at the request of former Senator Hollings in order to determine whether a Special Resources Study was warranted. The investigation found that Camden Battlefield appears to have strong potential to meet established criteria for addition to the National Park System and should be considered for additional study.

The reconnaissance study also examined nearby Historic Camden, a National Park System affiliated area within the City of Camden, to determine whether it should be included in a Special Resource Study. Historic Camden is one of the oldest towns in South Carolina and some of its features illustrate life during the colonial and Revolutionary War periods. In 1971, the historic town site was listed as an historic district on the National Register of Historic Places. The town site was also the subject of a 1980 Special Resource Study authorized by Public Law 95-629. The 1980 study concluded that Historic Camden had lost much of its historic integrity and that several non-historic features intruded upon the site of the colonial town. In 1982, Congress authorized the Secretary to provide assistance to Camden, but did not designate it as a unit of the National Park System.

In the 22 years between the 1980 study and the 2002 reconnaissance, both the board of Historic Camden and the City of Camden have done an admirable job addressing many of the items that made the area unsuitable for designation as a unit of the National Park System. The city has purchased property within the boundaries of the colonial town and relocated power lines that intruded on the historic scene. The Kershaw House, a colonial building that served as headquarters for British General Cornwallis during the Battle of Camden, has been restored.

Nonetheless, the National Park Service reconnaissance study concluded that the town site alone was unlikely to be suitable or feasible for designation as a unit of the National Park System.

However, the reconnaissance study recommended including the town site in a Special Resource Study that focused on the battlefield.

We recommend amending both the short title of the bill on page 1, line 5, and the text on page 4, line 12 by inserting “special resource” before “study” to use the term for the proposed study that is normally used for such studies.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or the other members of the subcommittee may have.